Report Based TM470 Projects

Some Thoughts

First, some terminology

- There are two <u>separate</u> things we need to keep straight

- The report that you are creating

  - Which I will call the "Deliverable Reports"

- Your TM470 TMA or EMA submission document

  - Which I will call the "TM470 Report"

- It is only the second of these that gets you any marks!

  - (Comparable to development projects, the app or website whatever is <u>not</u> marked, (or even used) it is the TM470 report that is read and gains the marks

Project Based Reports – Good things

- You CAN make a very successful TM470 Project out of a Report
- Lets you study a particular topic of interest in depth
  - (So choose something that interests you!)
- Fewer technical issues (development environment, hosting etc.)
- Less "set up time" (development environment, hosting etc.)
- Likely to be fewer "time sinks" / rabbit holes (no bug hunting…)
- You could well end up with something useful / publishable in its own right…
  - Could be a distinguishing feature on your CV

Project Based Reports – Challenges

- Spending too much time on the deliverable report
- Making a poor choice of topic / question
  - Or getting lost along the way
- Demonstrating all of the learning objectives in sufficient depth
  - (see later)
- Motivation
- Report writing skills

Choosing a Topic

- (These are just personal thoughts, not hard and fast rules)
- Narrow your focus
  - not "An investigation of Cloud Computing"
- Answer a specific question (or questions)
  - Is "x" suitable for "y"? / What is the impact of "w" on "z"?
- Carefully define your target audience (for the deliverable report)
  - Who would you expect to read this?
  - What would they get from it?
  - What (if anything) might they do differently after having read it?
  - (If "nothing", why are you writing the report?)

Defining the Report

- (These are just personal thoughts, not hard and fast rules)
- Define your subject area, the questions and the audience
  - Make sure this is genuinely an ITC project!
- Determine your "success criteria" – what are your actual aims?
- Length? As long as it needs to be to achieve your aims?
- Format? Think about structure, appearance, target medium?
- Will you need illustrations? Charts? Graphs?
  - What tools will you need to produce these?
- BCS Accreditation? Does this align with your computing pathway?

Looking at the Learning Objectives - 1

- LO1 Fundamental Technical Principles
  - Show you understand the technology you covering
- LO2 Goals and Content
  - Should be part of your process
- LO3 Resources, Skills, Risks
  - Should be part of your process
  - But don't forget risks!

- LO4 Gather and Evaluate
  - Should be a major part!
- LO5 Critically Review
  - Should be part of your process
- LO6 Information Sources
  - Critical! You MUST have a good literature search
  - Remember a negative result is still a result!
  - Use the library / ask for help!

Looking at the Learning Objectives - 2

- LO7 Communicate Clearly
  - Should be fundamental!
  - Make sure you target your intended audience – explain how

- LO8 Learn Independently
  - What do you know at the end that you didn't know at the start?

- LO9 Plan and Organise
  - Just as important as a development project
  - Same tools and techniques

- LO10 LSEPI
  - Important! Use of data, legal issues, copyright, impact of being "wrong / misleading"?

- LO11 Problem & Solution
  - This is why your report needs to be specific and to have a goal

Final Tips

- Keep in touch!
- Plan resources and skills as soon as possible!
- Use the library and the library staff!
- Have fun!

- Good luck!